

REMARKS

In the present Office Action, claims 1-29 were examined. Claims 1-29 are rejected.

A. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,056,570, issued to Harris et al., in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,019,348, issued to Powell. The applicant respectfully traverses these rejections as explained in the following remarks.

The '570 patent is directed to a capless vehicle refueling system and the '348 patent is directed to a quick-connection of a fuel fill pipe to a fuel tank. The Examiner broadly states that the combination of the '570 and '348 patents renders claims 1-29 obvious. Other than independent claims 1 and 18, the Office Action mailed May 13, 2004 fails to provide a basis of rejection for each of dependent claims 2-17 and 19-29. The Office Action mailed May 13, 2004 fails to specifically point out how the combination of the '570 and '348 patents teaches or suggest each of the limitations found in the dependent claims. Specifically, neither the '570 patent nor the '348 patent teaches or suggests a means for preventing axial rotation of the inner funnel within the outer funnel as claimed in currently amended claims 1 and 18.

Claims 1 and 18 have been amended to include the limitations of original claims 7 and 24, respectively, which are now canceled. In advance of another obvious rejection, the applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider the subject matter of original claims 7 and 24 as now included in currently amended claims 1 and 18. As mentioned above, original claims 7 and 24 are directed to a means for preventing axial rotation of the inner funnel within the outer funnel. As stated on page 6, lines 17 and 18, "inner funnel 54 fits snugly within the outer funnel 14, but is preferably not fastened or welded thereto." To simplify construction and help reduce the cost of the part, it is preferred that inner funnel 54 and outer funnel 14 are not welded together. At the same time, as best understood by FIG. 3, inner funnel 54 must be prevented from rotating within outer funnel 14 to ensure that both funnel remain properly aligned. If they become misaligned, a nozzle may not properly fit within the both funnel. Accordingly, at page 6, lines 20-27, an example of one means for preventing axial rotation of the inner funnel within

the outer funnel is provided as follows, "protrusion 66 extending from the outer funnel 14 is received within a corresponding recess 68 formed in the inner funnel 54 to prevent axial rotation of the inner funnel 54 within the outer funnel 14," respectively.

Again, neither the '570 patent nor the '348 patent teaches or suggests a means for preventing axial rotation of the inner funnel within the outer funnel as claimed in currently amended claims 1 and 18. In addition, both the '570 patent and the '348 patent fail to discuss whether the inner and outer funnels should be welded together and whether the inner funnel should be prevented from axially rotating within the outer funnel. Accordingly, the applicant respectfully submits that the combination of the '570 and '348 patents fails to render obvious currently amended claims 1 and 18. Because the balance of the claims depend from claims 1 and 18, for at least the same reasons, the combination of the '570 and '348 patents fail to render claims 2-5, 8-17, 19-22, and 25-29 obvious.

B. Summary

Claims 1-5, 8-17, 18-22, and 25-29 are pending in the present application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 8, 18, and 25 have been amended and claims 6, 7, 23, and 24 have been canceled.

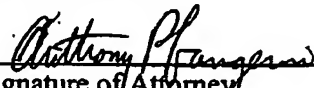
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims of this application are now in a condition for allowance and favorable action thereon is requested.

If the Examiner has any questions or believes that a discussion with Applicant's attorney would expedite prosecution, the Examiner is invited and encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below.

Please apply any credits or charge any deficiencies to our Deposit Account No. 23-1665.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date: June 29, 2004
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